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PRESS CONFERENCES

Operation Blood Drive
Prepared Remarks for U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara
September 13, 2011

Good morning. My name is Preet Bharara, and I am the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York.

Sixteen months ago, I made a promise to the good people of this City that we would do everything possible to break the cycle of violence; everything possible to make the streets safe for everyone; everything possible to restore the rule of law; everything possible to bring new hope to Newburgh.

And so here we are back again, in force, for the third time in 16 months, to make another payment on that promise.

Today, we unseal a superseding indictment charging 20 members and associates of the Bloods gang in Newburgh, New York, with various crimes of violence and drug distribution offenses.

The Indictment charges members of the gang with two murders; as well as attempted murder, robbery, assault, conspiracy to distribute drugs, and the possession of firearms for years at drug markets in the City.

Specifically, we have indicted 20 defendants in 32 counts – 11 of them charged for the first time federally. The Indictment alleges that every single one of them was a member, affiliate, or associate of the Newburgh Bloods.

The Newburgh Bloods, we allege, openly sold crack cocaine on the streets of the City and fiercely protected their drug territory, through violence, to cause intimidation and fear in others, including rival gang members and the general public.

The Indictment marks the second time this year that we have chosen to use a powerful federal tool – RICO – to fight back against the gang violence that plagues Newburgh.

As we did in February in a move against the Latin Kings, we allege that the Newburgh Bloods is a Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization, whose purposes included the distribution and sale of crack cocaine, and preserving and protecting the power, territory, and profits of their gang through murder, attempted murder, other acts of violence, and threats of violence.

Fifteen defendants are charged with committing and attempting to commit violent acts. Among the acts of violence alleged:

- **the murder of Tyrik Legette in April 2009 during a vicious group beating and stabbing, done in broad daylight and in the middle of the street;**
- **the murder of Lamont Young in March 2009, who was shot to death in a pool hall by a member of the Newburgh Bloods;**
- **the attempted murders of two individuals who gave offense simply by falsely claiming to be members of the Bloods, an intolerable act in the view of that ruthless gang;**
- **the attempted murders of rival gang members in the Latin Kings and Crips; and robberies of suspected drug dealers.**

We are working towards the time when that map can once again boast more landmarks than violent crime scenes.

Our work is not finished, but our work to date has been significant. In total, in connection with our efforts against the Newburgh Bloods and Latin Kings, so far over the last 16 months:

- **We have charged more than 100 defendants;**
- **We have secured, already, guilty pleas from more than half of them;**
- **We have charged every type of gang-related offense – including drug trafficking (in crack, powder cocaine, heroin, even marijuana); witness tampering; firearms possession; and racketeering;**

- **We have charged 26 defendants with crimes of violence, including five murders, two attempted murders, and a host of assaults and attempted robberies;**

- **And every single one of the gang members and associates we have charged is now facing federal time.**

We are holding people accountable; we are gutting the gangs that once roamed free; and we are bringing back the rule of law.

We may have a ways to go, but we are undertaking such sustained action, so that we will see sustained results – in the crime rate, in the quality of life, and in respect for the rule of law.

The Newburgh Bloods and other violent gangs have held the good citizens of Newburgh hostage for too long. And that is why we once again renew our pledge to this City.

The elimination of the Bloods and Latin Kings and other violent gangs will not in and of itself bring about renewal in Newburgh, but the curbing of gang violence and drug activity is an absolute precondition to the sustainable prosperity and sustainable justice that every American city should enjoy.

Wherever you live in America, you deserve to live in peace and in safety.

Now let me tell you the reason we are at this point. Today's action would not have been possible without the remarkable team work of the finest and most dedicated federal, state, and local law enforcement personnel anywhere:

- **the New York Office of the FBI, represented by Diego Rodriguez, Special Agent-In- Charge for the Criminal Division; the tireless James Gagliano, Supervisory Senior Resident Agent; and Michael Rourke, Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge of Branch C;**

- **the New York State Police, represented by Troop F Commander, Major Edward Raso;**

- **the Newburgh Police Department, represented by Chief Michael Ferrara;**

- **Orange County District Attorney, Frank Phillips; and**

- **Orange County Sherriff, Carl Dubois.**

Also standing with me today are:

- **Robert Buskey, Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge the Drug Enforcement Administration's New York Office;**
- **Brett Dreyer, Assistant Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Office of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Homeland Security Investigations;**
- **Newburgh Mayor, Nicholas Valentine and Orange County Executive, Edward Diana.**

I would also like to thank Kenneth Torreggiani, Deputy Inspector General of the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision and Officer-in-Charge of the Newburgh Police Department, Lt. Michael Clancy; and Port Jervis Police Chief, Bill Worden.

And last, but certainly not least, the dedicated career prosecutors from my office: Assistant United States Attorneys, Michael Maiman, Amie Ely and Harris Fischman, who are led by Margaret Garnett and Todd Blanche, Chief and Deputy Chief, respectively of our Violent Crimes Unit.

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